

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest in each community. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Large conglomerates like Sinclair have made it clear that they have no interest in the communities they purportedly "serve", by broadcasting cookie-cutter stories playing to a narrow, preordained constituency.

Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter to the people of Michigan, those issues that effect neighbors and friends, impacting our daily lives, and right in our own backyards-- like jobs and health insurance!

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. As citizens, we intend to take back the airways for the mandated use of our communities, by watching Sinclair and other media consolidators of local stations for any violations of that public trust, and acting to report those violations.

If Sinclair wants to air one side of a political issue, they must serve the public interest by allowing equal time for presentation of an opposing view, such as the film , "Going Up River", which details John Kerry's military service to America in Vietnam. Only in this way, will they prove their support for the nonpartisan reporting required by our laws.

Thank you.